

## Bennett Announces Additional \$20 Million For Mormon Cricket Control

*Cricket money secured this year by Bennett now totals \$7.6 million*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Chairman Bob Bennett (R-Utah) announced that an additional \$20 million for Mormon cricket control will soon be headed to three western states, with Utah's share equaling \$6.6 million.

"As Utah continues to suffer tremendous losses from the five-year drought and cricket infestation, these funds will bring relief to our state," said Bennett. "By giving priority to Utah for use of these funds, my colleagues on the committee understand the severity this disaster has had on our local economies."

As chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Bennett made certain Utah's interests were met when the conference committee determined which provisions to include in the Fiscal Year 2003 Emergency Supplemental Bill. Through Bennett's leadership, the conferees agreed to equally divide the \$20 million between Utah, Nevada, and Idaho, which have all experienced the most devastation from the crickets.

Earlier this year, Bennett secured \$4 million for Mormon cricket relief in western states, with \$1 million earmarked for Utah. Today's conference committee actions will bring this year's Utah cricket money to \$7.6 million, up from \$650,000 last year.

The latest Utah Department of Agriculture and Food drought damage assessment report calculated total dollar loss in Utah from the drought and crickets at over \$200 million. The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service estimated that over the past year, crickets have infested nearly 3.2 million acres in the state.

Following the filing of the conference report in the House, which should occur next week, the report will proceed to the full Senate and House for a vote, before being signed into law by the president.

## BENEFITS OF CONSERVATION PRACTICES

Do conservation practices improve water, soil, and air quality? Do conservation practices enhance wildlife habitat across this country? To help answer these questions, the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will conduct the National Resource Inventory - Conservation Effects Assessment Project in October.

The resulting information will be added to other data sources to create a complete picture of environmental and conservation management conditions.

Answers from this survey will be used to estimate the potential benefits that have been achieved by farm conservation programs.

NASS works with farmers and ranchers to provide meaningful, accurate, and objective statistics that help keep U.S. Agriculture informed. This survey provides farmers and ranchers with an important opportunity to help ensure that conservation programs continue to provide America's working lands with the assistance needed to remain both healthy and productive in the future.

"We safeguard the confidentiality of all survey responses," said Rick Kestle, State Statistician. "Data from individual operations are combined with other responses prior to summarization at the national level. We will not disclose any data about an individual operation."

Annual progress reports will be published by the National Resource Conservation Service beginning in 2005. All agricultural statistics published by NASS are available at [www.usda.gov/nass/](http://www.usda.gov/nass/). For more information, call 1-800-747-8522.

Find agricultural statistics for your county, State, and the Nation at [www.usda.gov/nass/](http://www.usda.gov/nass/).

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## West Nile Update

# West Nile Virus Detected In 21 Utah Horses

There have been 21 horses that have tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV) in Utah since the virus was first confirmed in the state on August 15. The 21 horses resided in Uintah (12), Emery (6), Duchesne (1), Sanpete (1) and Wayne (1) counties.

One human case of West Nile Virus has been detected: in Uintah County. WNV is NOT transmissible from horses to humans.

Of the 9 most recent cases, one of the horses was reported to have been vaccinated prior to being purchased at auction but the administration of the second vaccination is not verified. One of the horses received a single dose in late August. None of the other horses was vaccinated. At least two of the animals were euthanized. Five of the animals were under 10 years of age, three were over twenty years of age. The age of the other animal was not reported. We still have not had a positive animal reported from the 10-20 age range.

The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) is strongly advising horse owners throughout the state to continue to protect their animals by vaccinating them for the West Nile Virus if they haven't done so already. The WNV vaccine is available from local veterinarians.

The most common sign of West Nile virus in horses is weakness, usually in the hindquarters. Weakness may be indicated by a widened stance, stumbling, leaning to one side and toe dragging. In extreme cases, paralysis may follow. Fever is sometimes evident, as are depression and fearfulness. WNV causes encephalitis and affects the central nervous system.

For more information about the West Nile Virus, please visit the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food's web page at: [www.ag.utah.gov/](http://www.ag.utah.gov/) or the Utah Department of Health's web page: [www.health.utah.gov/](http://www.health.utah.gov/).



The 2003 Annual Report features an easy to use table of contents that lists each of the various UDAF programs. One-thousand CD ROM disks will be distributed along with the traditional hard copy version of the report.

## 2003 Annual Report Ready For Release

The 2003 Utah Agricultural Statistics and Department Annual Report is again being published in two formats this year—the traditional hard copy and a second version on CD ROM. The CD disk contains identical text and pictures as the printed version, but it also allows readers to click on Internet links to access more information about timely and important issues.

Using technology to improve communications with the public and the agricultural industry is one of several goals outlined in Commissioner Peterson's and Governor Leavitt's 1000-day plan.

The annual report will be available in the public information office in early October, and on the Internet at: [www.ag.utah.gov](http://www.ag.utah.gov).

## Free Water Testing Offered by Local Conservation District

Utah soil conservation districts, in conjunction with the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF), are sponsoring free water sampling for local residents to promote awareness of ground water quality. Water sampling and testing of water wells, agricultural wells, and springs is provided as a public service. Utah Commissioner of Agriculture and Food, Cary G. Peterson, emphasizes that it is important that people understand their quality of water and how to protect water quality to insure good health and crop production.

The sampling program provides chemical analysis of minerals, ions, total salts, pesticides, and Coliform and E. coli bacteria. Each person that signs up to have their water tested will receive a complete water analysis report and letter explaining the report. The program is voluntary and non-regulatory. Its purpose is to provide water quality information for citizens of Utah who use water that is not regulated under the federal Clean Water Act. You can get more information and schedule water sampling by contacting Mark Quilter at UDAF (801) 538-9905. You may also request information by fax at (801) 538-9436 or email [mquilter@utah.gov](mailto:mquilter@utah.gov).

More information about the department's Ground Water Program is available at: [www.ag.utah.gov/mktcons/groundwater.html](http://www.ag.utah.gov/mktcons/groundwater.html)

